

King County  
Department of Natural Resources and Parks  
Solid Waste Division

# Class Act

School Recycling Program Newsletter — November 2007

## New Assembly Program Begins *Earth Challenge: The Choice is Rs*



The assembly show encourages choices for a more sustainable school, community, and planet.

The King County Solid Waste Division launched its newest assembly program in September. This year's program focuses on getting recyclables out of the trash at schools and at home, and practicing the four Rs: reduce, reuse, recycle, and rethink. A discussion [guide](#) provides facts, activities, and challenges for the classroom.

The program already has received high accolades.

- Program is so good year after year. I continue to learn things.
- Wow, I loved the entertaining, energetic, "hip" presentation—the kids were really engaged.
- The kids loved the assembly! We had a great discussion afterward about being more careful with our purchases.

The assembly is already completely booked, but will be offered again next fall. Schools can register on the wait list by emailing [Emily States](#).

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### Greening Our Schools

#### Green Schools Success Stories

Since it began in 2003, the King County Green Schools Program (GSP) has assisted over 200 schools throughout the county to reduce waste and recycle, conserve energy and water, reduce and better manage toxic materials, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and expand environmental education. Read success [stories](#) that demonstrate how schools have increased sustainability and saved money.

#### School Saves with Free Electronics Recycling

*Kings Elementary* took advantage of Apple Computer's Free Trade-In and Recycle Program for Education. Apple picked up eleven pallets of computer related electronics, including 172 monitors, 70 PCs, 40 printers, 12 scanners and 11 boxes of miscellaneous item, saving the school \$4,000 in electronics recycling fees. Learn how your school can take advantage of this [program](#).

#### Parents Bus to School Open House

*Glacier Park Elementary* has chosen to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as one of their Green School Program goals. Their first project of the school year was to promote mass transit to their Fall Open House. The school hired district buses to drive major routes and encouraged parents and students to use this mass transit service rather than driving individual vehicles. The school will continue its project by promoting

## **Hazards on the Homefront Lessons Used To “Green” Middle School Science**

Sixth-grade science teacher Jessica Levine at Eckstein Middle School in Seattle highlighted the bioaccumulation lesson from the King County Hazards on the Homefront program as part of her “Greening Middle School Science Curriculum” presentation at the Environmental Education Association of WA (EEAW) conference on November 10. Jessica received a Hazards on the Homefront mini-grant last spring to help students understand the hazards of certain everyday chemicals. Students created posters in their native languages about hazardous products, and hung them around the school to share this important information. To learn more, see [Jessica’s project](#) description and samples of student posters.

## **Students at the Russell Ridge Center Use Label Reading to Clean Their School**

Science teacher Susan Aigner gave her students empty household hazardous product containers to examine their labels and identify signal words and hazards. Students used their knowledge to examine the products in the classroom science cabinets and office storage shelves. Their research led to the removal of a few products from the school to ensure a cleaner and safer environment. As a follow-up assignment, some of the students are now creating their own products and labels.

*The Russell Ridge Center is an alternative school in the Tahoma School District that partners with parents to educate students.*

## **Vashon Island Families Take Steps to Protect Their Groundwater**

Hazards on the Homefront workshop participant Claudia Gross-Shader organized a presentation for families in the Vashon Island Family Link program on the basics of label reading, the risks of hazardous products in groundwater, and the use of safer alternatives. Since the sole source of Vashon’s drinking water is their groundwater, this group also plans to present what they’ve learned to the Vashon Groundwater Committee. Other future activities include creating a native-plant garden with the help of the local high school horticulture students.

## **Endeavor Elementary, Issaquah**

Kimberly Ralph’s fifth grade students established a Waste-Free Snack Day for their classroom. Students are now more aware of the waste created by a variety of snacks, and they continue to practice waste reduction on a regular basis. They plan to promote waste-free snacks to the entire school.

## **Green Team Projects off to a Great Start!**

This fall Green Teams have been working diligently on recycling, litter pick-up and native garden projects at their schools. Student groups at **Inglewood Junior High, Glacier Park Elementary, Franklin Elementary, Eagle Rock Multi-age School, Audubon Elementary, and Black Diamond Elementary** have been working on improving recycling at school and engaging the entire school community in waste reduction and recycling activities. Green Teams at **Evergreen High School** and **Fall City Elementary** have been picking up litter around their schools and at local parks.

parent carpooling to school during this school year.

## **School Districts Feed Hungry and Reduce Costs and Waste**

At the end of every school year, many school cafeterias have edible food that will reach expiration dates over the summer. Typically, this food is disposed in school garbage dumpsters and sent to the landfill.

This past June, the King County Green Schools Program organized meetings between several King County school districts and two food distribution organizations - Food Lifeline and Northwest Harvest. As a result, Federal Way, Issaquah, Lake Washington, Northshore and Shoreline school districts made arrangements to have their useable, leftover food collected. A total of 5,000 pounds of food from these five districts was distributed to food banks and meal programs in our communities. The food provided 3,900 meals to hungry families and the school districts saved money in disposal costs.

Food Lifeline and Northwest Harvest also can pick up food prior to other school breaks such as in mid-December. The Good Samaritan Food Donation Act protects donors from civil and criminal liability if food donated in good faith is later found to cause harm to the individuals that receive the food.

Interested school districts can contact

- [Dani Turk](#), Food Lifeline, 206-545-6600, ext. 231
- Barbara Cerna, Northwest Harvest, 206-923-7451 or Tom Breyer, 206-923-7446

## **School Environmental Health and Safety Materials**

[Materials](#) are available from the recent WA Department of Health workshop that can help your school reduce pesticide use on school grounds, promote green cleaning and safe chemical use, improve indoor air quality, and safely maintain facilities.

## **Online Resources for Teachers**

### **King County Resources**

[King County Programs for Educators Guide](#) - The 2007-2008 update of this annotated list of programs and services for educators in King County is now available.

[Worm Works: Activities with Your Worm Bin](#) - Use this monthly calendar to do activities related to your classroom worm bin.

[A Year of Reuse Activities](#) - Get ideas for reusing and reducing

**Clark Elementary** and **Harbor School** are starting native plant gardens.

Marie Hartford's Green Team of third and fifth graders at **Thoreau Elementary** received a Green Team mini-grant to plant and care for a native plant garden. Students are also using a worm bin to provide compost which will be used to nourish their garden.

At **Discovery Elementary**, Tasha Kirby's Green Team of third through fifth grade students has used a mini-grant to purchase durable recycle bins for use outside their school building. Though the school has a successful recycling program, recyclables were being found in the trash cans around the playground and school entrance. The students are monitoring the bins and notifying community groups that use the school grounds during non-school hours of proper recycling practices.

Register your class or environmental club as a Green Team by contacting [Triangle Associates](#) or Kristine Cramer at 206-583-0655.

waste throughout the year with this calendar. This site also includes templates for paper reuse projects including making envelopes and twig notebooks from reusable materials.

[Plan and Plant a Native Plant Garden at Your School](#) - This eight-page brochure is a step-by-step guide for involving your students in learning about native plants and chemical-free gardening, while conducting science experiments.

[Green Team Carpool Project](#) - Use this step-by-step guide to implement a carpool project at your school. Read facts about green house gases, learn how to reduce your impact, and use the worksheet to calculate your carbon dioxide reduction through carpooling.

**Salmon Resources**

[Celebrate Wild Salmon -Youth Art Contest](#) - Create art celebrating salmon and what it means to you. Awards include having your art framed and displayed in Washington D.C., gift certificates, and more.

[Hatchery History for Teachers](#) - Whether you want to take students on a hatchery tour, raise salmon in your classroom, or find new lesson plans, Friends of the Issaquah Salmon Hatchery (F.I.S.H.) can help. This site provides all the materials you need to plan a complete lesson on salmon.

**Spring Outreach Fair for High School and College Students-Mark Your Calendar!**

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